Wagner's Book About America. Pastor Wagner affords some very entertaining and pleasant reading for Americans in his book "My Impressions of America," ranslated from the French by Mary Louise Hendee (McClure, Phillips & Co.). The preacher of the simple life was oppressed by a sense of the absence of simplicity when he came to a study of the English language in the way of preparation for his visit to this country in 1904. He says he found that he had two oceans to cross-the Atlantic and the English grammar. Several times in previous years he had essayed to master this formidable tongue, and each time he had recoiled from it in blank defeat. He mentions a discouraged feeling-a feeling that its depths were too deep, its intricacies too intricate for any but the desperate. He said to himself: "Impossible to acquire this language-above all else to pronounce it!" But now that he had been nvited to go to America, and was going. he found the very genius of hard work operating in him. This was precisely what had been needed. At once the whole view and business suffered agreeable change. He tells us: "Suddenly the English appeared to me a delightful tongue, and to hear it spoken or read it became my favorite occupation." The actor Delorme of the Renaissance Theatre, who had played Shakespeare in English in the United States, took him in hand. He was of great benefit. The now happy sufferer records: "He gradually habituated me to the proper pronunciation, and inflection, and during the vacation in the country we had sessions of work together that lasted from morning till night, during which I addressed to my tireless and scrupulous auditor lectures, sermons and speeches of all sorts, striving to carry over from one language into the other the whole repertory of my ideas. In my leisure moments I spoke English to myself, and eventually I thought in Eng-

That little story of how he acquired the English language is told by Mr. Wagner in a chapter entitled "Obstacles." The following chapter bears the interesting and personal heading, "Enter Mr. John Wanamaker." It tells of a meeting with Mr. Wanamaker in Paris and of Mr. Wanamaker's invitation to the author to spend his first fortnight in America at Lindenhurst, Mr. Wanamaker's country place near Philadelphia. As Mr. Wagner boarded the steamship La Lorraine to set sail he found awaiting him a cable message from Mr. Wanamaker, which said: "America welcomes you." The sea and the effects of its tumult upon the unaccustomed traveller are described in another brief chapter; in still another there is comment suggested by the lighthouses on the American coast. Waking in the morning the voyager beholds New York harbor all alive. He forbids himself the distinction of being the first of his kind to overlook the skyscrapers. His comment is: "At first sight, I frankly confess, the 'skysorapers' struck me as monstrosities, as mushrooms of extravagant growth, sprung from the overstimulated soil of Titanie cities; as abnormal excrescences arising out of the fever and folly that are the issues of a mad competition for material wealth. And there may be something of all this in them-a little of everything, good and evil, in their origin. For the sake of sesthetics, to which men's life never should become indifferent, it may be hoped that these phenomenal build, ings may remain the exception." He saw the glory of them later, looking from Brooklyn early on a winter's evening. Like other urban objects they have their variations and degrees of beauty.

Mr. Wanamaker was the first person he saw on landing. "His good, kind face seemed a sign of the happiest augury." The reporters asked the preacher of the simple life for a message for themselves. He answered them: "Report only what is true." There is a chapter on "The First City Sights." In places in New York "the movement of busin tumultuous than anywhere in Paris.' From the elevated trains he was enabled to look into many interiors and to observe considerable family life while flying. He was impressed by the ingenious method the people have of drying clothes—by the vast webs of pulley lines running from back windows. His first Sunday was spent at S. S. McClure's place at Ardsley. He gives his impressions of the Hudson. Priving from Ardsley to Irvington, he was surprised to meet so few automobiles. Readers will be surprised that he should have met so few. His first speech in English was made at Mr. McClure's. There are chapters about Lindenhurst, about the visit to the White House, about many interesting and charming places. The American houses pleased him. He was pleased by the beds, the bathrooms, the varieties of soap. All the chapters are marked by bits of vivid description running into queer little ser-monizings. The book is full of the pleasant spirit. It is keen and generous. It will delight a multitude of readers.

Colonial Life in India "Set in Authority" is an ambitious effort on the part of Sara Jeannette Duncan Cotes to present in the form of a novel some idea of the administration of Colonial affairs in England's Eastern possessions. The chief character of the story is a Vicerov of India who has signalized his rule by remarkable activity in the strife between civil and military authority which finally results in his recall. After that it matters little to the significance of the events recorded that the Viceroy is represented as a bachelor and that the name of Lord Curzon is mentioned among his predecessors in

The scenario of the story girdles the globe from the sunbaked plains of India otheice fields of Alaska with a central station of arrival and departure in England, whehe personages are introduced and salient issues are discussed around the tea table. The plot is intricate, elaborate and carefully worked out. Its main theme, the trial of an English soldier for the murder of a native, seems slight to support so great a mass of incident and intrigue involving the highest officials of the empire. The narrative is sacrificed to discussions of civil and military affairs and the love interest is weak and abortive. The chief commissioner of a province and the "demiofficial" lady doctor spend some time talking esoteric stuff and drinking tea together; but he was a married men, shea moral lady, and even the author refused to take advantage of the wite's timely death. He might have—she would have forgiven himbut he didn't. A faithful English girl has a secret love for the black sheep of the tale, art he committed suicide, thereby defrauding a worthy girl of a neer do weel husband and cheating the author out of a dramatic scene-the hanging of a British soldier in the presence of his regiment, for the murder of the native which is the crux of the plot. Perhaps the writer thought she couldn't manage the situation. Certainly the regimental officers knew they couldn't, and connived at the poor chap's taking himself

presentment of social life among English officials in India who take their little English widow. Various pleasant personages are introduced in the widow's chapters of continuous through a man's loyalty to his dead friend, which interferes with his wedding the willing which interferes with his wedding the willing widow. Various pleasant personages are introduced in the widow's chapters of continuous through a man's loyalty to his dead friend, which interferes with his wedding the willing widow. Various pleasant personages are introduced in the widow's chapters of continuous transfer and speed the stream of grownup romance. They appear the stream of grownup romance. It was an excellent idea to draw on Sir holiday season and their number already is

ainlessly with opium.



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lage on traditional lines. The characters are well drawn, the dialogue bright and entertaining and the life described is picturesque and interesting, although it lacks the piquancy and savor Kipling has taught extract a passing interest, and ultimately us to expect from it. Wives are loyal to the inevitable is accomplished in the wedtheir lords, husbands faithful to their consorts. There is no scandal to spice it. Even Simla, that city with the past that made Kipling or that Kipling made, has reformed, the author assures us, and the chief attraction on the Mall to-day is the parlor of the Young Women's Christian Association.

Mrs. Cotes knows her subject thoroughly from her long residence in India and in spite of some small errors in regard to official precedent her book ranks above the average in interest and excellence. (Doubleday, Page & Co.)

A Woman's Confession to an Idol.

Marian Lee's "Confessions to a Heathen Idol" (Doubleday, Page & Co.) belongs to the school of fiction wherein the heroins tells the story of her life by means of letters, a diary or some form of intimate self-revelation designed for public perusal. The introspective woman must have an audience. Her self-consciousness craves sympathy. Her egotism demands recognition. The writer of the story is a widow facing her fortieth year with the uneasiness which that dreaded age often arouses in women unappropriated in marriage relations and unabsorbed in the rearing of young children. She makes her nightly confessions to a teakwood idol of a taciturn disposition. The confessions are didactic, voluble and personal. The idol, not being supplied with a phonographic apparatus, never interrupts with irrelevant remarks. Why a woman should waste her time and emotions on a wooden image when the right man is at hand is past the comprehension of all men and most women. Evidently the woman wanted to write a book and thought founded. that was the best way since it had the merit of novelty in scheme.

The story told in these confessions with one eye on the Deity and the other on the audience is the old tale of delayed happiness The chief interest of the story lies in the through a man's loyalty to his dead friend,

fession, occasional conversations are arranged made up of running comment on men and women and things, epigrammatic ding of the widow, when the confessions end in a final and notable confidence: "When a woman is merried she confesses to no one, not even to a broad minded teckwood idol. The right kind of a wife never confesses, even to herself."

An Old Law Furnishes a Queer Tale. An ancient statute once in force in the District of Columbia, which permitted a father to will away his unborn child, is the inspiration of Caroline Abbot Stanley's new story, "A [Modern Madonna" (The Century Company). Since the statute was repealed some ten years ago it is difficult to understand why the book should have been written. Founded upon a dead issue, made up of old time melodramatic material, the story is one

of those upon which either praise or blame

confers undeserved distinction. A young widow who has been unhappily married and whose husband is killed by the girl he has wronged finds that her unborn child is willed to her brother-in-law. The solution of the difficulty is to marry the brother-in-law, which she does after endless lawsuits and conflicts, flight and pursuit, argument and brain fever, and the good old time reconciliation at the child's sickbed. The well worn wires of coincidence are pulled, regardless of plausibility, to persuade the widow to care for the wronged girl in her dying hours and to adopt her child. So the wronged wife, the illegitimate son, the cruel brother and the baby of contention all settle down in a happy family.

Meantime the woman suffragists and lobbyists go on righting unjust laws at the national capital, as they repealed the stat-ute upon which "A Modern Madonna" is

Juveniles.

While the tide of fiction is setting in strong this season the current of stories

legion. Those that have come to hand are of uniformly respectable workmanship generally well written and nearly all provided with the necessary amount of sensational incident. It will be hard for parents to choose among them.

The portraiture of entertaining and natural children has become a rather widespread art in England. Three of these will be met with in "The Railway Children." by E. Nesbit (Macmillans), a sturdy small boy and a stolid very small girl, both rather familiar types in fiction and a nice older girl, who is the heroine. The story is designed to harrow the feelings, as it turns on a tragedy in life, and to some may seem undesirably morbid, but it leads up to a dramatic and affecting climax. The heroine's excess of kindness is not likely to find imitation in America. The pictures are

A steady fight against crime is kept up in Allen French's strenuous tale, "Pelham and His Friend Tim" (Little, Brown and Company). An unusually vindictive and stupid villain with a talent for throwing stones keeps the young heroes busy. A senseless strike guided by a fraudulent agitator offers a picture that older readers may find instructive. The story is well told and abounds in vigorous action.

There is promise in the descriptions of the country and of country people in "Roberta and Her Brothers," by Alice Ward Bailey (Little, Brhwn and Company), but the tale is put together very loosely, perhaps to leave the threads for a "series." The theme seems to be the struggle of a high school girl with her inner self, and is not wholly novel. There is a middle aged love story and there are suggestions of impending juvenile affairs of the heart. The reader may wish that the author would stick to grown up fiction and let the half

growns alone. An unusual touch will be found in Sara E. Ambler's "The Dear Old Home (Little, Brown and Company) in the introduction of the Amish people. This enables the author to bring in a good deal of natural, unforced humor when describing the advenintended for youth, for some reason or tures of her city children in the country. other, surpasses in volume and speed the There is a horserace, but the incidents are tures of her city children in the country.

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Table d'Hoie \$1.50. Telephone 551838 St. the "Poems" are being reprinted in count-, less editions Scott's essays and other works which are just as full of interest, are not easy to get and are dropping out of sight. The romance of Scotland's history has never een told so well as in the "Tales of a Grandfather." The same publishers issue "Stories from Dickens," by J. Walker McSpadden. The author keeps up the old time tradition that children should become acquainted with Dickens's unhealthy children. Here we find again Oliver Twist, Smike, Little Nell, Paul Dombey and Pip, with Little

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the horrors are toned down mercifully,

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